

REMARKS

The outstanding final Office Action mailed July 8, 2004, (Part of Paper No./Mail Date 4) has been carefully considered. In response thereto, please enter the following amendments in which claims 1 and 2 are amended; and claim 5 is cancelled. Claims 1 - 4 and 6 - 29 are now pending in the present application. Reconsideration and allowance of the application and presently pending claims, as amended, are respectfully requested.

Indication of Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant first wishes to express his sincere appreciation for the Examiner's allowance of claim 9 – 29 and for the Examiners indication of allowable subject matter in claims 4 and 5. Specifically, the Examiner has indicated that claims 4 and 5 would be allowable if re-written in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Examiner Interview

Applicant wishes to express his sincere appreciation for the time that Examiner Raymond S. Dean spent with Applicant's representative, Mr. Eric M. Ringer, conducting a telephone conversation on June 18, 2004. During the telephone conversation, Examiner Dean informed Mr. Ringer that claims 4 and 5 were "objected to." Examiner Dean agreed that if the "original" claims 1 and 2 were amended to include at least either one of the limitations of claims 4 and 5, then the newly amended claims 1 and 2 would be allowable.

Response to 35 U.S.C. §102 Rejection

Claims 1 – 3 and 6 – 9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over McGhee et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,658,049) in view of Martin et al. (U.S. Patent No. 3,735,056).

Independent Claim 1:

Applicants have amended claim 1 to: (1) cancel limitations previously entered in Applicants' Response mailed to the United States Patent and Trademark Office on April 14, 2004, which thereby reverts claim 1 back into its original form; and (2) include the limitations of claim 4. On June 18, 2004, Examiner Dean indicated that the original claim 1 would be allowable if it were to include the limitations of either claim 4 or claim 5. Therefore, Applicants' respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn.

Independent Claim 2

Applicants have amended claim 2 to: (1) cancel limitations previously entered in Applicants' Response mailed to the United States Patent and Trademark Office on April 14, 2004, which thereby reverts claim 2 back into its original form; and (2) include the limitations of cancelled claim 5. On June 18, 2004, Examiner Dean indicated that the original claim 1 would be allowable if it were to include the limitations of either claim 4 or claim 5. Therefore, Applicants' respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn.


CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is believed that all pending claims are in proper condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference would expedite the examination of the above-identified patent application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned.

AUTHORIZATION TO DEBIT ACCOUNT

It is believed that no extensions of time or fees for net addition of claims are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to allow consideration of this paper, such extensions are hereby petitioned under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a), and any fees required therefor (including fees for net addition of claims) are hereby authorized to be charged to deposit account no. 20-0778.

Respectfully submitted,

By: 
Eric M. Ringer
Registration No. 47,028

Thomas, Kayden, Horstemeyer & Risley, LLP
100 Galleria Pkwy, NW
Suite 1750
Atlanta, GA 30339
770-933-9500